

THE RUTHERFORD *Report*

THE NEWSLETTER OF SECOND DISTRICT SUPERVISOR JANICE RUTHERFORD



Comfort Pets Volunteers visit hospitals, retirement homes, schools, and other locations with their certified therapy dogs to help spread cheer and speed patient healing.

Summer 2017

Tears are the summer
showers to the soul.

—Alfred Austin

Comfort Pets Spreads Cheer with Dogs

When Linda Smith retired from her career as an air traffic controller and moved to the mountain community of Crestline in 2004, she wanted to use her newfound free time to do some good.

“And I wanted it to have something to do with my dogs.”

She’d been watching a TV show about therapy dogs being used to help inmates in prison, so she started researching

how to train and certify her dogs—three at the time—to become therapy dogs as well.

Eventually, she got one of her dogs certified and began to bring her to Mountains Community Hospital in Lake Arrowhead to meet with elderly patients in the hospital’s extended care wing.

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Business Made Big Splash in World Lily Market

When Bobby Van Ness’s health began to decline, he and his wife, Edith, decided to move to sunny Southern California to escape the chilly Pennsylvania winters in the early 1920s.

The couple moved to a home in the unincorporated community of San Antonio Heights and started a business selling gold fish, which were in vogue at the time. The sparkly fish along with various municipal water features were especially important to convincing newcomers that Southern California, despite its arid appearance, had lots of water.

The couple sold goldfish locally and via the mail and also developed backyard ponds for customers. Edith, who was an avid gardener, added water lilies and bog plants to their stock, and, in 1932, Van Ness Water Gardens issued its first catalog. It told readers, who were suffering through the Great Depression, that a water garden was “not only a thing of beauty, but a great source of comfort during these days of stress.”

The couple sold their business to Edith’s first cousin, Ted Uber, and his wife, Louella, in 1952. Ted had been successful at selling decorations and house wares he fashioned from aluminum, but his business was hit hard by

VAN NESS, PAGE 4

Preserving San Bernardino County's History

Inside a nondescript building at a San Bernardino business complex, history lives.

San Bernardino County Historical Archives—a division of the Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk—got its start in 1979 after state lawmakers concerned about historical landmarks and information being lost to the ages ordered counties to preserve items and documents with enduring historical value.

Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk Bob Dutton, who previously served in the California Assembly and Senate, said preserving the County's history is an important task.

"It doesn't matter what you are looking at, whether it's how the early Chaffey brothers came in and put a lot of the infrastructure in the west end, or the Silver King Mine and its leading to Calico Ghost Town, or you have the Earp family—Virgil Earp was one of the early town marshals for the city of Colton. These are all part of the rich heritage of San Bernardino County," Dutton said in a video highlighting Historical Archives.

The division maintains records from as far back as 1853, including birth and death records up to 1926, Board of Supervisors minutes, County budget books, Grand Jury reports, mining records, court files, and scores of other historical documents.

Glass book shelves line the walls of the office's small reception room, and dusty old books stacked tightly on 14-foot-tall shelves and filing cabinets packed with documents fill the office's internal storage area.

Visitors come into the office for a variety of reasons.

There are attorneys researching cases, genealogy buffs scouring vital records, and then there are the folks trying to nail down who has the rights to various water sources in the County.

"We have lots and lots of people researching water rights, who owned it, when it got separated, when different water entities were created," Archivist Genevieve Preston said.

"We also have lots of people who want to research if they are members of local Native American tribes."

Archive staff direct the latter visitors to the National Archives office in Perris since the federal government maintains records about births and deaths on tribal land.

About four years ago, the office began building an online database that includes digital images of some records.

Historical Archives is also home to the archives of San Bernardino County Sun newspapers, and it holds the archives of the physical papers from 1894 to 1998.

The paper has been digitized in partnership with the California Digital Newspaper Collection at the University of California at Riverside.

It is available digitally at Cal State San Bernardino in the Pfau Library and through Newspapers.com. Issues from 1894 to 1958 are also available on the CNCDC website at <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc>.

Learn more about Historical Archives and explore its online database by visiting <http://www.sbcounty.gov/ARC/Main/Default.aspx>.

Weekend Trolley Available in Mountains

Getting around the Rim of the World mountain communities for weekend getaways just got a lot easier.

Whether you're enjoying the cool water Lake Gregory and want to visit Santa's Village or you're perusing the shops in Toptown Crestline and decide to check out the concert series at the Lake Arrowhead Village, Mountain Transit's new trolley can get you there.

The trolley costs \$5 for unlimited re-boarding all weekend long (including Labor Day). Get off at any stop or take the entire loop from Crestline to Sky Forest (about an hour

and a half) as your trolley driver tells you all about the unique hamlets that make up the Rim of the World mountain communities.

The trolleys are ADA accessible and collapsible strollers are allowed on board. Tickets can be purchased with cash from conductors or by credit card at the Mountain Transit office located at 621 Forest Shade Road in Crestline. The service ends after Labor Day weekend.

Visit www.MountainTransit.org or call (909) 878-5200 for more information.

COMFORT PETS, PAGE 1

"She made people happy," Smith said. "I thought this is so wonderful, the power this dog has to make people happy. I have to share this with others."

She placed an ad in the Mountain News seeking others interested in volunteering their time and dogs to comfort others, and she immediately got five replies. Thus Rim of the World Comfort Pets was born in 2005. At first, the nonprofit group had to educate people about the benefits of using dogs in clinical settings.

"People had no idea of the efficacy of therapy dogs when it comes to treating patients' stress and anguish," Smith said.

Today, the nonprofit has more than 60 teams of trained therapy dogs and handlers with established visiting programs throughout the County including at the Jerry L. Pettis Memorial Veterans Administration Hospital in Loma Linda and Kaiser Permanente Hospitals in Fontana and Ontario. They also visit several retirement homes, rehabilitation health care facilities, colleges, libraries, and elementary schools.

"We never have to solicit or market ourselves because of our reputation and word of mouth," Smith said.

Valley of Enchantment Elementary School teachers praised the group's work to encourage students to read. The Rim Unified School District has hosted Comfort Pets' reading enhancement program since 2007.

"The dogs snuggled up with students and the children read stories to their assigned pet and they felt no 'pressure to perform,' so their reading skills improved with every visit!" the teachers wrote. "It was, and is, a wondrous experience to behold."

And a retirement community in Redlands had even more praise for the nonprofit.

"What makes the program so unique is that residents who may be in need of some form of physical therapy are actually getting it as they 'play' with the dogs, whether it's going for a walk, throwing a toy or offering the animal a snack."

Smith welcomes and is always looking for other dog owners who would like to pay it back and pay it forward in volunteer service by joining the group and training their pets to work as therapy dogs, but she lets them know the process isn't easy.

"They have to make a commitment to do this with their dog," she said.

Handlers should have a firm desire to take their dog by the paw and leap into an adventure of helping those who need it most, Smith said. They experience aging residents in retirement and patients of all ages recovering from serious injuries, illness, and traumas.

"When you see that person's face light up, you are in heaven," Smith said. "You did this with your dog. That's the addiction we have. We want more of that happiness."

While most of the group's volunteers are dog owners, Smith said she doesn't turn anyone away who has the heart to help.

"The heart of a volunteer knows no bounds," she said.

Learn more about Rim of the World Comfort Pets at www.comfortpets.org

2nd District Trivia

Last Issue's Answer: What agency deeded Lake Gregory to San Bernardino County in 1977 after the park began losing money? The Crest Forest County Water District

Question: What early San Bernardino County settler is credited with planting the first orange trees in the County in 1857?

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aluminum rationing during the Korean War much as it had been during World War II.

Ted didn't know a lot about flowers, but he knew of an eccentric, reclusive man named Martin Randig in San Bernardino who had developed an astonishing array of hybrid water lilies. He went to visit Martin on numerous occasions to seek his help, but he was turned away time and again. Eventually, however, the two developed a friendship, and Martin granted Van Ness Water Gardens the right to introduce eight new tropically lilies he had developed.

"That's what put us on the map," Ted's son, Bill, said. "That made us the number one lily company in the world."

The lilies Martin developed were more condense than ordinary water lilies, and they produced more flowers as well, Bill said.

Most of the company's flowers were sold abroad, including Germany, the Netherlands and South Korea.

"We were better known throughout the world than we were locally," Bill said.

Bill and his wife, Carolyn, took over the business in 1972 after Bill was discharged from the Air Force. During a trip to Amsterdam, the couple was dining in a small café when they sparked up a conversation with some locals.

"They asked, 'Where are you from?' and we told them we're from America," he said. "Then they asked 'Do you know the Van Ness Water Gardens?' and I said, 'Yes, we own it.'"

Over the years, Van Ness Water Gardens has struggled through droughts that prompted more and more people to abandon their backyard ponds, and the advent of big box retailers such as Lowes and Home Depot didn't help either.

The additional inspections and other shipping hassles that came after the terrorist attacks on 9/11 also made it more difficult to get their delicate flowers to foreign markets, which had been their bread and butter for so many years.

"I'm going to keep it going for awhile, but I don't know for how long," said Bill, noting that he's now 70 years old. "This property will probably be sold and developed into three or four homes."

Van Ness Water Gardens is located at 2460 North Euclid Avenue on a sprawling property dotted with concrete ponds filled with an assortment of water lilies, lotus plants, gold fish, koi and bull frogs. Visitors are welcome.

Learn more Van Ness Water Gardens by visiting <http://www.vnwg.com>.

Upcoming Events

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| Summer 2017 Farmers Markets | The Fontana Farmers Market is open from 8 a.m. to 1 p. m. on Saturdays at the northeast corner of Sierra and Arrow. Victoria's Farmers Market is held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Fridays at Victoria Gardens (South Main Street) in Rancho Cucamonga . Running Springs hosts a Farmers Market and Artisan Faire from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m on Saturdays at 2625 Whispering Pines Drive. |
| June 30 | The Lake Arrowhead Village hosts concerts at about 6 p.m. every Saturday throughout the summer. Free and paid seating are available. |
| July 1 | The Crestline Chamber of Commerce will host the Jamboree Days Parade at 10 a.m. Jamboree Day activities—games, vendors, music and food—will follow in Crestline . Call (909) 338-2706 for more information. |
| July 4 | Communities across the nation will celebrate Independence Day with fireworks shows and more. Below are some Second District activities. Rancho Cucamonga will host a fireworks show at the Epicenter. Gates open at 5:30 p.m. Call (909) 477-2752 for ticket information. Fontana will host a fireworks show at Fontana High School. Gates open at 6 p.m. Call (909) 349-6900 for ticket information. Lake Gregory Regional Park will host a fireworks show and BBQ in Crestline . Call the park at (909) 338-2233 for information. |
| July 10 | Rancho Cucamonga hosts free movies on Mondays in July at Los Amigos Park, 8625 Madrone Avenue. Movies begin at dusk. Attendees can bring lawn chairs and blankets. |
| August 5 | The Upland Lions Club will host a fundraiser featuring The Habit Burger from 4 to 8 p.m. at the Gibson Senior Center, 250 N. Third Avenue in Upland . Call (909) 490-1559 for information. |
| August 16 | The Kids' Swap Meet and Craft Corner will take place from 5 to 8 p.m. at Memorial Park in Upland . Kids can sell used games, toys, and clothes as well as their own hand-made crafts. Leftovers may be donated to Steven's Hope for Children. Call (909) 931-4280 for information. |

Dates and times are subject to change without notice. Please contact Supervisor Rutherford's office at (909) 387-4833 if you have any questions or suggestions for the Events Calendar. You can view information about more local events on Supervisor Rutherford's home page at www.sbcounty.gov/rutherford.